

Chapter VII

EPILOGUE

Introduction

There are two forms of democracy – direct and indirect. In a direct democracy, all the qualified voters assemble at stated times to enact laws and decide issues. But this method is possible only in very small communities. The application of democracy to the large nation-State has been made possible by the device of representation, resulting indirect democracy. The voters in the modern indirect democracy elect representatives to legislate for them. In India the majority citizens official participation in the governmental process is confined to voting for elected representatives only. However, It may be admitted that the influence of a voter on Government is not limited to casting his/her ballot. The citizen may also write or personally contact his/her representative or form pressure groups and use mass media.

Representative legislatures on the assumption that the people can delegate the legislative portion of their sovereign power to the elected representatives. The legislators have to play a very significant role in the modern indirect democracy. Considering this aspect of a modern state and experiencing the changing status of the political system and process of Assam . I have considered to the role of the legislators in Assam since 1972, which may be considered as a turning point of the political history of Assam due to the enactment of the Re-organization of North East India Act.

Coming to the epilogue of the thesis I must mention that India is well known for having the largest concentration of the tribal population and Assam accomodates different racial, linguistic and cultural groups. Economically, Assam is a backward state and the main factors behind the state's economic backwardness are isolated location, difficult terrain, lack of infrastructural facilities for industrialization, lack of capital and entrepreneurship Agricultural is the main stay.

The second chapter of my thesis shows the socio-political background of the ST MLAs in Assam. This chapter has been formulated on the basis of Interview Schedule which reveals rural flavour of the social life of each MLA. Setting aside three cases of Jogmohan Basumatary, Smt. Rekha Rani Das Boro and Bharat Chandra Narah all the ST MLAs interviewed by me belong to agricultural families.

During the period from 1972 to 1994 the strength of Assembly sitting days was 892 and the number of questions raised was 18,578. The major issues which occupied more space in the discussions were roads, hospitals, education, forest, flood, law and order situation, agriculture, land, etc.

For the development welfare of the tribal communities separate provision is found under Tribal Sub-plan in which the ST MLAs have ample opportunity to take active part. These plans in the plain districts of Assam basically emphasise development of backward tribal areas by improving the infrastructure initiating and family oriented schemes with focus on rural roads, primary education, health care, drinking water, etc.

Closely connected to the development of tribal population is the forest village concept. There are 524 forest villages with a total population of about 1,60,179 comprising 20,694 families. The inhabitants of this forest villages are

mainly Bodo, Sonowal, Kachari, Tiwa, Mising, Deori and Rabhas. The forest villagers are entitled to certain facilities from the Forest Department such as grazing of cattle, fuel wood and timbers for construction of houses, etc.

Assam is facing certain very complicated and sensitive problems. The most serious problems are foreigners', language, unemployment, ethnic autonomy and land. I have discussed these problems in two chapters i.e. V and VI of my thesis. The question of illegal migration of people from Bangladesh after its liberation is a major political issue not only in Assam but in the entire region. Due to various reasons, it is not possible to correctly estimate the size of such illegal migrants continuous influx of illegal foreigners changed the demographic pattern of Assam.

The Government of India expressed before the Supreme Court that while it was true that the responsibility to check infiltration at the border lies with the Border Security Force in respect of the border with Bangladesh all powers of the Central Government under section 3(2)(c), (cc), (d), (e) and (f) of the Foreigners Act 1946 and under the Foreigners Order 1948 had been delegated to the state Government with their prior consent.

In Assam almost every ethnic group has its own language or dialect and uneven development of these languages cause constraints not only to the legislators of Assam but also to the inter-relationship of different social groups in Assam.

The problem of unemployment among the tribals can never be divorced from the land issue as almost all of them are agriculturist families. The youths in the tribal communities can not go for facilities for self-employment provided by the Government due to non-possession of land patta. Further lack of development of agro-based industries adds fuel to this flame.

The ethnic autonomy movement launched by tribals brought into existence Autonomous Councils in the Bodo, Rabha, Mising and Tiwa areas. Since the tribal population is not concentrated in one particular area, demarcation of the jurisdiction of the council has become a problem which could not be solved by the Government.

FINDINGS

The study has helped to understand the pattern of Legislative behaviour and the mode and the degree of political participation of the ST MLAs on the floor of the Assam Legislative Assembly. It has provided a new perception of different aspect of the participation of the ST MLAs in the Legislation.

The field survey with the Interview schedule and unstructured interview or informal discussion on the issue with political leaders has provided a clear picture of the level of value perception and to identify the motivational factors.

My study has brought to the light one significant feature that the community feeling or tie alone is not the sole factor for victory of ST candidates in the election to the Assam Legislative Assembly. This can be illustrated by looking into the candidates elected from the unreserved constituencies to the Assembly. From 1972 to 2000 the strength of the ST MLAs is 66 and out of 66 ST MLAs 49 represent reserved constituencies and 17 represent general constituencies. The existing speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly Ganesh Kutum represents Gohpur constituency which is not reserved for the STs.

However, in India community identity is very much a phenomenon in Indian politics, particularly in selection of candidates. Each political party, be it national or regional, pays primary attention to the communal composition of the constituency to decide on a candidate who, in the opinion of the party, would be

able to poll the votes of the dominant community in the constituency. Assam politics is not an exception to it.

In Assam during the period from 1972 to 2000 regional political parties seems to be more popular amongst Scheduled Tribes than the national political parties. The strength of the seats occupied by ST MLAs in the present Assembly (1996 to 2000) is 25 and only one, Shri Bharat Chandra Narah belongs to Congress (I) political party. However, mention may be made here that Narah started his political career as a member of the newly formed Asom Gana Parishad regional political party. Later he shifted to the national political party.

In the session 1996-2001 the strength of the S.T. MLAs in the Assam Legislative Assembly is 25. The breakup of the strength on party basis is given as below:-

Party	No of ST. MLAs.
AGP (Regional)	11
ASDC (Regional)	5
PDF (Regional)	4
UBNLF (Regional)	1
Independent	2
BMC (Regional)	1
Congress (I) (National)	1
Total	25

The study also shows that two ladies belonging to ST communities have been participating actively in the Legislation. They are Rekha Rani Das Boro and Pramila Rani Brahma. Both these ladies belong to Bodo Community.

Several backward sections of Assam like Ahom, Chutia, Koch Rajbongshi etc., are also demanding ST status for upliftment of their communities. In

response to the demand made by the Koch Rajbongshi, declaration was made by the Government of Assam to consider this Community as Scheduled Tribe. Accordingly, in the last general election Karuna Datta, a member of the Koch Rajbongshi community contested election and he was elected from the Majuli constituency, which was reserved for STs. Later on ST status of Koch Rajbongshi was withdrawn by the Government of Assam keeping the position of the elected MLA hanging. Meanwhile Karuna Datta expired and by-election was held in May 2000 and Sri Jogeswar Doley, a member of the Mising community has been elected from AGP party.

While observing very closely to the activities of ST MLAs, one finds that these are basically rooted in their social life. Assam is the home of multitude of tribals and each of them has, by and large, succeeded in maintaining its own identity. Villages in tribal areas are traditionally been independent units. All decisions affecting the village used to be taken by debating in meeting through a perfect democratic set up. Villages used to be managed jointly and the things like as to which area shall be used for shifting cultivation, specially in hills, in a particular year used to be decided jointly.

In their original pattern a living trade was simple. The needs of the people were limited to a few essentials of life like cloths, utensils, ornaments, most of which produced by themselves. Step by step with the breaking of isolation and invasion of foreign trade the temptation to acquire things which were not at all essential, grew. To satisfy newly created needs the tribals require cash and people become self-centered without caring for the need of fellow villagers. The elder villagers who still continue to be traditional lack control over the young generation. It results in a situation which is very complicated and unpredictable.

Further, most of the tribal groups are very shy and introvert by their nature. Thinking beyond the affairs of family or at the most village is nobody's business.

Anything which is not traditional is not accepted very easily. They are by temperament easy going people who do not react very sharply to new ideas, new methods and experiments.

The manifesto of the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) published during Assembly Elections in 1996 may be mentioned in this connections, which may be read as below :

Continuing the Glorious Tradition of Struggle towards Autonomous State

“In Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills, our decade long movement has gone from strength to strength. We have expanded in every nook and corner of the two hills districts as the symbol of unity and struggle, peace and democracy championing the aspirations of all the communities. We in the ASDC, have resisted all the Congress tactics of suppression and black mail while other parties and movements had succumbed to these pressures disintegrated. In fact, the ASDC stood like a rock withering away every attacks of the Congress and handing it the taste of defeat in the soil of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills. This, we strongly believe, brings fresh hopes not only to the people of the hills to the entire population of Assam.

Ten years ago, we gave the clarion-call -“No Autonomous State, No Rest”. We had not dithered an inch but we are marching decisively step by step towards the fulfillment of the commitment. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in April/95 is an important milestone in this march. We have gained substantially by compelling the Government to pass the Constitution Amendment Bill and it stands out as a unique example of recent years when it was accepted by all cutting across party politics in the parliament and later by the State Assembly. In the hills, people irrespective of caste-creed, language and religion hailed the MoU. This we had achieved without surrendering our movement and the principled causes for which the people of the hills had sacrificed.

Even after all these, the State Government has been throwing all imaginable impediments to sabotage the full implementation of the MoU. And this is exactly why we in the ASDC, are committed to carry on the struggle to take the MoU to its logical conclusion and to move forward decisively to achieve the fullest and effective autonomy when the people of the hills alone become the master of their destiny. We, therefore, call upon the people to elect the ASDC candidates to advance our cause.”

For the development and welfare of the tribal people at the State level there is a Department of Welfare of Plains Tribes (WPT) and Backward Classes (BC) headed by Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Assam. This department is responsible for coordination and control of the Tribal Sub-plan of the State.

Further, there is a State level Advisory Council for the Welfare of the ST(Plain). It is headed by a Minister, Department of Plains Tribes and Backward Classes of Assam. All ST(Plain) MLAs and ST(Plain) MPs of Assam are members of the Council.

The Tribal Development Authority is a Statutory Body, whose jurisdiction extends to all plains districts of Assam, which is headed by the Chief Minister of Assam with all the ST(Plain) Ministers and MLAs of Assam.

Thus ST MLAs have a scope to redress the grievances of the tribal people and to satisfy their aspirations through this special authority.

The Assam Legislative Assembly, at present consists of 126 members out of which 25 are ST. MLAs. I have made attempt to interview all the 25 MLAs, but only 13 MLAs i.e. a simple majority responded positively.

Out of 13 MLAs interviewed all of them except Derhagra Mushahary who did not go to college, had school education in the rural areas. Thaneswar Boro, Bharat Chandra Narah and Smt Rekha Rani Das Boro are the products of Gauhati University with MA. degrees. Deva Kanta Ramchiray is a Doctor and Pradan Baruah is a diploma holder in Mechanical Engineering and rest BA degree holders. Thus one finds that with good academic background STs of Assam have entered into decision making process of the state and the participation of ladies in Legislation is better in comparison to those of general castes.

While answering to my interview schedule all of them expressed their concern about the tribal problems. Their inner feeling of being neglected by the people of general castes has become transparent.

Most ST MLAs have come from agrarian families and are attracted by the regional politics. ST MLAs are convinced that rural and tribals problems can be solved regionally, since they are the sufferers of the problems. They can make correct diagnosis of these problems and provide effective policies.

The ST MLAs get a very wide scope to take active role in the process of formulation and implementation of the Tribal Sub-Plan. The estimated area under Tribal Sub-Plan is 10,001 sq. km, that account for about 14% of the state's total area of 78,438 sq km. Under the Tribal Sub-Plan 19 integrated Tribal Development Project areas covering about 4542 villages have been constituted. In these areas 9 Scheduled Tribes (Plain), viz., Barman in Cachar, Boro-Kachari, Deori, Sonowal, Tiwa, Mech, Mising, Rabha, etc. are found.

The main objective of the Tribal Sub-Plan is to emphasis all round development of Scheduled Tribes (Plain) in Assam. More emphasis has been given to the generation of self employment opportunities in the sectors like

agriculture, dairy, veterinary, sericulture, handloom and textile, small village and cottage industries, fisheries etc.

There is a State Level Advisory Council for the welfare of the ST (Plain). It is headed by the Minister, welfare of plains Tribes and Backward Classes of Assam. All ST(Plain) MLAs and ST(Plain) MPs of Assam are members of the Council. For self-development the Tribal Sub-Plan is the best alternative device to be utilised by the ST MLAs in addition to the general scope in the Assembly and outside it.

Foreigners' problem is the main burning problem of Assam affecting all sections of the population. The Government of India has also realized that the influx of foreign nationals is a serious threat to the unity, integrity and the security of country. The foreigners' problem is very well reflected in the recent report of Lt.General(Rtd) S.K. Sinha, the present Governor of Assam to the President of India. Interestingly, the existing Government of Assam is manned by the Leader of the Assam movement against foreign nationals. The Chief Minister, Prafulla Kumar Mahanta himself led the six-year old Assam Movement and the election campaign of the AGP Party centered round this issue. After formation of the Government the issue of illegal immigration has almost been thrown out of the agenda of the Government. Neither the Center nor the State has thought seriously about the consequences of the influx of illegal immigrants into India through the open borders of the country. Illegal influx changed the demographic pattern of Assam. It is the AASU which is making persistent effort to solve this problem and to some extent it is successful to convince the Election Commission of India about the socio-political consequences of the influx of foreign nationals into India, resulting in deletion of the names of foreigners from the voters' list. However, the process remains incomplete.

The failure to achieve full employment, failure to eradicate poverty and failure to remove social injustice are reflection of the failure of Assam's economic planning. In the Assembly the problems of unemployment is raising today, what was raised and discussed even 50 years ago. The major weaknes in the planning strategy is that sufficient attention has not been paid to the question of engaging large manpower in agriculture, specially paddy and tea.

.Language is the means by which the individual expresses his personality. Alphabet is the means by which language is written. Script is the means by which language is written. Script is the means by which the alphabet is written. Any alphabet can be written in any script, provided the alphabet has the necessary sounds. Otherwise visual symbols may be invented or added to represent this. However, the script adopted for writing an alphabet must have qualities, clarity, legibility and capacity for easy manual and mechanical manipulations. Modern Assam, which is a multi-lingual state is experiencing the problem of language, script, official language and medium of instruction in schools.

The Assam Legislative Assembly passed the Official Language Bill, making Assamese the sole official language of the state with provision for the use of different languages at the district level and English to continue to be in use at Secretariat and Heads of Department Offices was introduced on 10th October 1960 by late Bimala Prasad Chaliha the then Chief Minister of Assam. The passing of the bill was marked by hartals and demonstrations in Shillong, then Capital of Assam. Assam faced in 1972 the movement relating to the medium of instruction in the Higher Educational Institution. This was followed by the demands for introduction of Bodos as Associate State Language and Bodo, Rabha, Mising etc. tribal languages as medium of instructions at the primary school level.

The demand for 'Udayachal' made by the Bodos in 1960s may be considered as the beginning of the ethnic autonomy movement launched by the Scheduled Tribes (plains) in Assam. The grant of autonomy through the constitution of the Autonomous Council with the concept of satellite area makes the situation more complicated leading to the demand for 'Bodoland'. This idea of ethnic autonomy is gradually penetrating into all the disadvantaged sections of the society in Assam.

Since British rule Government is providing various measures for protection of tribal land by Introducing Line System, Tribal Belts and Blocks etc. But the problem remains unsolved till date, Land alienation, encroachment of tribal belts and blocks are stills affecting the social and economic life of the tribals. This land problem has a close link with the unemployment of the tribal youths.

Suggestions

The very concept of Parliament got its germination on the fertile soil of the socio-political world of Great Britain in the thirteenth century. The development of parliamentary system in Britain through important historical processes is one of the greatest events of human history. This system could influence many countries including India. However, India has not accepted this system without modification. We have a parliamentary system but not with a hereditary head of state.

Indian federal system has provided autonomy to the states and as such the state Legislature is to play a significant role. The State Legislature is empowered by our Constitution to make enactment on subjects incorporated in the state list and with limitation on concurrent list. Efficient and effective functioning of the Legislature can lead the political executive of a state, responsible to it, to travel in the desired directions.

To be an effective legislator, he must have requisite educational qualification, which is not necessary for contesting election. Because with a good educational background, a legislator will not find it difficult to understand a legislative procedure and also the procedure relating to financial and other important matters. A legislator has to play an important role both inside and outside the House. A legislator is expected to receive a large number of letters, complaints from the people of his constituency as well as from other constituencies of the state. To respond to all these letters and complaints to the satisfaction of the people a legislator must make an attempt to classify them systematically for quick and scientific disposal of the cases.

The legislator may also maintain important papers relating to day-to-day activities and documents received from the secretariat. Further frequent personal visits of the MLAs to their constituencies to acquire first hand knowledge of the situation is very essential.

It may also be noted to be an able legislator he/she must be a man/woman of honesty, integrity and must have a high standard of conduct. The duty and responsibility of a legislator does not end with his speeches on the floor of the House. Personal contact and discussion with the concerned department heads in the administration are also necessary for redressal of the public grievances. A department head certainly hears the representations of the legislators and gives priority to the problems if the legislator is a man of integrity and honesty and the Government officials will certainly attach great importance to his/her representations and try to redress the grievances.

Assam has a very rich social culture of entertaining guests with honour. This culture is providing a strong tie to unite all the people together even today in the rural areas of Assam. Since most legislators are coming from rural society it is

not at all difficult for them to treat the people with due honour. This kind of courteous behaviour of the MLAs may create a congenial atmosphere to command confidence from the public by the legislators.

Further members should be careful not to obstruct the deliberations by raising unnecessary point of order and there should not be any unnecessary interruption in conduct of the business of the House. These are very important because the conduct of the members is an example for others. The members must remember that they should always follow constitutional conventions to maintain dignity of the House. For example, no member should make any comment on the conduct of the President of India or the Governor and on the working of the Supreme Court or any other Court of Law.

The Legislature is a form, which provides opportunity to the representatives of the people to ventilate public grievances and shortcomings of the Government. To utilize these opportunities for the greater interest of the State one must be a devoted worker. He/she must remember that one has to acquire first hand knowledge on the problems to be raised on the floor. The contemporary Assam requires Legislators who are committed to the public cause with the inquisitiveness to make correct diagnosis of public grievances.

To make legislative effective provision may be made for training of the newly elected members of the Assembly through orientation courses, lectures and academicsits to different institutions and places, strict adherence to the Rules of the House.

It has become clear from the issues raised on the floor of the House that the State Government of Assam is not successful in undertaking balanced industrialization in the State. Experience shows that even in areas with rich natural resources are neglected, and natural resources, promised industrial

complexes are shifted or attempted to shift to outside the state due to political pressure from the Center and high bargaining capacity of the Management of the industries. In these cases the Students' Organization like All Assam Students' Union with the cooperation of conscious citizens had to come forward for protesting those attempt. It reflects lake of awareness and able leadership of the Legislators of the State.

The policy of the Government must be give priority to backward and no industry districts, specially dominated by the tribal inhabitants in setting up gas-based, tea-based, agro-based industries etc. It will stop the flow of migration from the villages to the towns. At present, mostly urban based educated persons and rural based educated migrants are enjoying the opportunities or facilities provided by the Government. Therefore, adequate provision should be made for easy access to information relating to rural development and welfare by the target groups.

Assam is facing series of ethnic movements which are playing a crucial role in setting the political agenda of the state particularly during the last couple of years resulting in creation of Autonomous Councils for Bodo, Mising, Rabhas and Tiwas by the Assam Government. More powers were given to the Karbi Anglong and N.C.Hills Autonomous Council by handing over 30 departments to the Councils. But the social and ethnic composition of the contemporary Assam is so complex that the decision of the Government to grant autonomy through Autonomous Council could not solve the ethnic problem of Bodos, it simply changed its colour and form. The problem arose at the time of demarcation of the geographical boundary of the Council, which centred round the concept of "Satellite Area". Ultimately, the demand for 'Bodoland' is appearing very starkly in the political map of Assam.

As a researcher I feel the best alternative policy to solve the problem of ethnic autonomy movement will be the provision for area based autonomy within the geographical territory of Assam. That is the concept of regional autonomy instead of ethnic based autonomy. Ethnicity based autonomy should be replaced by regional autonomy. It should be wholly democratic. My long association with the All Assam Students' Union as its General Secretary helps me to form this view and to contribute the view of Shri Sarat Chandra Sinha in this regard. I feel that the process of decentralization of power should travel to the grass root level of administrative organizations also.

While demanding autonomy the ethnic groups must be prepared to make the administrative authorities responsive and responsible, for each and every out of it. One should not forget that autonomy divorced of accountability would be a serious threat to a welfare state. It is the primary duty of the Legislators to ensure accountability of the administration through legislative means.

The present research work has led me to believe strongly that to solve the problems, the Government and the Legislators should have a clear motto and the motto should be **equal right and equal development**. Equal right should be given to every community of Assam and to ensure equal development of all the areas. The policy and approach of equal right and equal development can solve the problem of every community of the state.

Decentralization of power and planning to the grassroot is a very important factor. The 73rd and 74th amendment of the constitution gives maximum powers to the panchayats and municipally boards. Most of the departments including PWD, health, primary and secondary education, agriculture, rural development are handed over to the Panchayats. In Assam 73rd and 74th amendment are not yet executed. Through 73rd and 74th amendment the people of all communities of all areas of Assam can involved in the developmental activities. Over the Panchayats

there can be a Mahakuma Parishad or Zila Parishad by including the sub-division or district area. This body can be a elected body. The legislators can monitor the developmental activities and the legislator can give more time in the policy making process.

Foreigner's problem is the burning problem of Assam. Continuous influx of illegal foreigner changed the demographic pattern of Assam. It is a silent inersion. There is a threat to the sovereignty and integrity of the country, threat to the identity of the indegeneous people of Assam. Without solving this issue there cannot be peace in Assam. This problem must be solved permanently. Assam Accord was signed to solve this problem. The Accord is not yet implemented. The situation is becoming worse. To solve this problem Assam Accord will have to be implemented within a specific time frame. The IMDT Act and clause 3(1) of Citizenship Act should be scraped and Foreigner Act of 1946, which is applicable all over India, should be applied in Assam. Indo Bangladesh Border should be sealed within a specific time to stop further infiltration. A foreigner is a foreigner, he may be Hindu or Muslim. There should not be any communal thinking to deal with the problem. The political leaders must resist themselves from protecting the illegal foreigners. The legislator cutting across the party line should take bold and united stand to solve this problem permnently.

In the present situation the federal structure is very much essential. To safeguard the countries integrity and sovereignty the center should also be strong. The feeling of political injustice and economical exploitation by the centre should be removed through performance. In the federal structure there should not be any right for secession from the country. The growing centralization of political and economic power in India poses the biggest stumbling block to any healthy and real development of national unity even 50 years after the exit of British colonialism from the Indian soil.

The vision of India as united, multinational, multi-lingual, multi-religions country should be upheld and federalism be recognized as a basic principle of democracy and Indian unity. Federalism should not just mean “more power to the states”, but it should be visualised as an alternative approach to nation-building from below. Federalism should ensure comprehensive democratization of the Indian polity down to the grassroots, progressive devolution of fiscal and administrative powers and equal economic development keeping in mind the varied requirements of the remotest and most backward regions.

Deletion of Article 356 is necessary which empowers the Union Government to topple democratically elected State Governments and hijack the democratic process through prolonged President’s rule. Total abolition of the concurrent list is necessary, which has become a convenient smokescreen for greater and still greater centralization. Residual powers should also be vested with the states. A thorough restructuring of the financial aspects to provide greater financial power and autonomy to the States is necessary.

The principle of regional autonomy within states with concurrence of State Legislatures and constitutional safeguards to protect the cultural identities and rights of various ethnic groups and accelerate the rate of socio- economic development in all backward regions is necessary.

Only a federal restructuring of the Indian polity with devolution of powers down to the grassroot level will be able to fulfil the aspirations of the people of various nationalities in India and to meet the challenges of the future.

I must refer to the unemployment problem which may be considered as one of the biggest problem in to-day’s Assam. It is a major factor responsible for the acts of violence, looting, killing etc. Further, unemployment of youth causes wastage of manpower. No Legislative should ignore the youth power while

making policies for the development of the state. Proper manpower planning is very much essential in Assam. Systematic vocational education should be introduced to the education system.

The Assam Government should fulfill the backlog system, and implementing the Roster system.

In the Assam Accord Clause No. 7 it said "The Government takes this opportunity to review their commitment for the speedy all round economic development of Assam, so as to improve the standard of living of the people." The commitment remains as commitment on paper only. L.C. Jain Committee, S.P. Sukla Commission were formed to look into the matter of all round economic development. The Prime Minister of India declared economic packages. But the scenario of economic development remain the same. Implementing and monitoring machinery must be in place. State Government along with administration and Panchayats may implement the schemes and monitoring can be done by Central Government and non-Government Organization.

In this context scheme should be drawn up for reconstructional revival of the sick public sector undertakings of the State.

A scheme should be implemented for storage of natural gas from the oil fields of Assam, because the gas has been flared up in Assam continuously. Suitable legislation should be enacted to ensure that flaring of natural gas beyond allowable limit is made punishable by law.

A deeper insight into the vexing and burning problem of unemployment, of both the educated and the uneducated is a warranted condition. With a view to containing the agony, frustration and the resultant unrest, the need of the hour is

to introduce necessary legislative safeguard for 100% job securities to the indigenous people in the services of the Union Government and the State Government establishments. This measure is required to be implemented with immediate effect, and if need be legislative measures should be initiated.

The State of Assam is rich with many natural resources such as oil, coal, water resources, tea, etc. Considering natural resources as well as natural wealth, the Constitution has conferred right on the Union Government to utilise the resources. The provision deprive the State of Assam of any right over the resources within its resources. Assam has been made to approach the Union Government always with a begging bowl for royalty on the utilized resources. Special reference may be made to entries 53, 54 and 55 of the Union List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution which authorises the Union Government to make relevant legislation, rules and norms over the subjects referred to above.

To settle the multidimensional problems of the state, the lowest common factor being the economic crisis, the State of Assam should be conferred with the right over her natural resources in order to strengthen the economic foundation. There is an urgent need to review the Constitution for transferring entries 53, 54 and 55 from the Union List to the State List with immediate effect.

All income out of tea industry should be fruitfully utilized within the stake of Assam mainly for education and other economic activity.

Along with these Assam's future lies mainly on developing agriculture, pisciculture, horticulture, livestock, etc. 80% of population lives on agriculture and related works. If the educated as well as uneducated unemployed youths of Assam take to the above trades, the problem of unemployment can be rapidly reduced. The legislator should act effectively in this direction.

Land is the main factor in Assam. Tribal belts and blocks, forest lands, agricultural lands are occupied by illegal foreigners. In Assam Accord also there is specific clause to protect belts and blocks. Effective steps should be taken to protect the tribal belts and blocks. Though the tribal people is the indigenous people of Assam, many of them do not have the right over land, many of them do not have land patta. Due to illegal influx and flood many tribal people become landless. So permanent land settlement should be given to the tribal people. There are some forest villages in Assam where only tribal people reside. So, where the tribal people resides in the forest, for years together, without evicting them, these forest villages should be converted to revenue villages and officially responsibility should be given to them to protect and nurture the forest areas. Measure should be taken to have the right over land only with the tribal and indigenous people.

It is admitted fact that the economic hardship resulting from mismanagement and drainage of public money and the callousness on the part of the concerned authorities towards the welfare of the people, in many cases the helpless indigenous people, having no alternative, transfer their landed properties for monetary considerations to the people coming from both outside the state and outside the country. Such acute poverty has made many indigenous people homeless and landless. To protect the interest of the indigeneous people restrictions should be imposed to bar transferring of the right over land to the people coming from outside the state. Such legislative measure exist in the neighbouring State of Meghalaya. The legislator should also act effectively in this line.

In Assam the language issue has become serious on several occasions. To solve the problem of medium of instruction at the college level the Academic Councils of Gauhati University, Dibrugarh University and the Assam Legislative

Assembly has adopted (seperately) unanimous resolutions restoring English along with the regional language of the state. Bodo language is recognised as associated official language in Kokrajhar district and Udalguri sub-division. Rabha, Mising, Tiwa languages are recognized upto the primary level. However, no effective measures have been taken so far to implement these decisions by the Government. Nobody can deny the fact that the dynamic role of the Legislators is the basic requirement to lead the administration towards the welfare of the people. A proper environment should be created to develop every ethnic group's language and culture.

Constitutional safeguard is very much essential to protect the identity of the tribal and non-tribal indigenous people of Assam. The Assam Accord has promised "Constitutional, Legislative and Administrative safeguard as may be appropriate shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of Assamese people"

However, no safeguard has been provided so far. Some suggested measures are as follows:

In the case of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, Article 370 of the Constitution has been provided to safeguard the interest of Kashmiri people. In accordance with the powers conferred by this Article, the President of India has promulgated an order-" The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) order, 1954". A provision of this order is the addition of Article 35 A to the Constitution which provides for saving of laws with respect to the permanent residents of the State and their rights.

In the case of Assam, which has borne the brunt of a national problem caused by international migration, there should be a provision similar to "The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954".

Article 170(3) of the Constitution restricts further delimitation of the constituencies up to 2000 AD. This provision was added in 1976 by the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution. It has become absolutely necessary to review the position after the signing of the Accord since voting rights will be conferred on migrants who will be residents in Assam. The amendment to Article 170 of the Constitution made in 1976 could possibly never have visualized the situation obtaining in Assam today. As such, the amendment should not be applicable to Assam.

It was, therefore, suggested that the restriction imposed on delimitation of constituencies up to 2000 AD, vide the relevant proviso to Article 170 (3), should be waived in respect of Assam. This is because a review of the position has become necessary after the Accord. The process should be started instantaneously in case of Assam as a special case.

As provided in Article 169(1) and Article 171 of the Constitution of India a second chamber, viz., Legislative Council should be added to the State Legislature of Assam making it convenient to all the ethnic groups as well as arithmetically or numerically smaller groups of bonafide citizens to have their due and proper representation. This will help ventilate their genuine grievances to, besides creating a congenial atmosphere of understanding among all sections of the people in the State. This step should be considered in an expeditious manner in view of the gravity of the political, social and economic situation, prevailing in the State.

In the interest of protecting the socio-cultural identity of the indigenous people of Assam, which is unique in itself, being unity in diversity, in addition to the Constitutional safeguard, the time has come to introduce the inner line permit system in the State of Assam like its neighbouring State of Arunachal Pradesh by adopting suitable legislative measures with reference to entry 81 of

the Union List under seventh schedule of the Constitution. Time has given birth to the reasonable doubt that if this system is not introduced with immediate effect the identity of the indigenous people of Assam in the very near future shall be in great trouble.

There is an urgent need to consider the concept of dual citizenship, which is being felt more than ever before in the context of rising of regional forces all over the country. To fight against disparities, regional imbalances and all sorts of inequalities to establish the concept of equality, the regional forces had been very naturally raising their heads. In this context the issue of dual citizenship is becoming more and more relevant. Every constituent state of the Union of India should have its own citizenship and have the right to grant state citizenship besides Federal Citizenship and as such every citizen of the constituent state shall also be a citizen of India. The loyalty to the Republic of India will be further strengthened by this recognition.

Therefore, the time has come to adopt proper and acceptable legislative measures with reference to entry 17 of the Union List under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India.

To represent the real will of the people of the State in true sense and spirit, there should be contemplated appropriate legislative restrictions with reference to entry 72 of the Union List as well as entry 5 and 37 of the State List in favor of allowing only the indigenous people of Assam to contest elections to be elected to Parliament and to the Legislative of State and other democratic institutions at all levels. It is the need of the time to formulate relevant statutory measures, if need be even by making amendment to the Constitution.

In this regard in the tripartite talk between Central Government, State Government and AASU it has been agreed in principle to reserve the seats for

indigenous Assamese people in Parliament, Assembly and local bodies. Significantly, definition of indigenous person was defined in 1951 census report by both the Central and State Governments. In 1951, census report it was stated "Indigeneous persons of Assam" means a person belonging to the State of Assam and speaking Assamese Language or any tribal dialect of Assam or in the case of Cachar the language of the region". The legislator has a great responsibility to play an important role in the policy making, to translate the suggestions into reality.